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Atty. Docket No.: P69752US0

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed October 5, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and, by this Amendment, claims 1-13 have been canceled and new claims 14-30 have been added. Accordingly, claims 14-30 are pending in the application. Claims 14, 25 and 28 are independent. In view of the new claims and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicants have corrected informalities in the specification, including the addition of headings and the removal of references to the claims. The text added to pages 2a, 3 and 5 represents text taken from canceled claims 1-13 and therefore does not constitute new matter. The abstract has also been amended as set forth herein.

The Examiner rejected claims 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. By this Amendment, claims 1-13 have been canceled and new claims 14-30 presented which are in conformity with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Favorable consideration of the new claims is requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4 and 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,932,103 to Rice in view of EP 0 626 247 to Smith. Also under

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35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner rejected claims 2 and 7 as being unpatentable over Rice in view of Smith and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,539,666 to Schirmer, rejected claims 1, 5, 6 and 8-10 as being unpatentable over Smith in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,069,612 to Teutsch et al. ("Teutsch") and/or U.S. Patent No. 3,471,899 to Ronden, and further rejected claims 2 and 7 as being unpatentable over Smith in view of Teutsch and/or Ronden and further in view of Schirmer.

With the cancellation of claims 1-13, the rejections are technically moot. However, with respect to new claims 14-30, Applicants provide the following remarks.

As set forth in claim 14, the present invention is directed to a tubular film die head for extruding single-layer or multi-layer film. The tubular film die head includes an annular die gap and at least two fastening elements having coolant-carrying capability. The fastening elements pass through holes in the die head and fix at least two components, which together border areas bearing plastic melt within the tubular film die head, against one another. At least one of the fastening elements has a coolant intake line formed therein and at least one of the fastening elements has a coolant discharge line formed therein. This is not shown or suggested by the prior art.

Rice teaches a tubular film die head with a single fastening element structured as a coolant carrying element. Smith discloses the use of inlet and outlet passages for a blown film die. However, if someone skilled in the art were to combine Rice and Smith, the result would be a tubular film die head having an air inlet passage which would lead air through a fastening element as proposed by Rice and a simple bore outlet passage as taught by Smith. The teaching in Smith directed to providing the die head with an outlet passage gives *no hint of using another fastening element as the outlet element*. Rather, the skilled person wishing to improve the blown film die of Rice by using an outlet passage would provide the die head with simple bores going therethrough since the die head taught by Rice already has a sufficient number of screws to secure the parts of the die head. Consequently, the most Smith teaches is another through-passage, and *not a through-passage within a fastening element*. The latter is only suggested by the present invention.

Given that Smith only teaches conventional passages to lead air into the tubular film, adding Teutsch and Ronden thereto still lacks the necessary teaching to reach the claimed invention. Both Teutsch and Ronden are limited to the use of screws *only as fastening elements*. These patents do not lead one

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skilled in the art to a tubular film die head with two fastening elements, one having a coolant intake line therein and the other having a coolant discharge line therein, as claimed by the present invention.

The only reason given in the prior art for using a screw with a bore hole is to lead gas into the inner side of the tubular film. No other reason is given, including that of saving space as suggested by the Examiner. Furthermore, since Smith already teaches passages to lead air into the tubular film, there is no reason to add screws having bores therein since doing so would be redundant and would not result in any added effect. Only upon consideration of the presently claimed invention would such a suggestion come to mind.

Claim 28 is also patentable over the prior art for at least the same reasons and further as providing an inner nozzle ring, two bars, and a connecting plate which border areas bearing plastic melt within the tubular film die head. The fastening elements pass through holes in the die head and fix the inner nozzle ring, bars, and connecting plate against one another. This also is beyond what is shown by the prior art.

Method claim 25 is directed to a process for the mutual fixation of at least two components which together border areas

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carrying plastic melt within a tubular film die head. The process includes the steps of fixing a first fastening element, which has a coolant carrying intake line formed therein, through at least two components which together border areas carrying plastic melt, and fixing a second fastening element, which has a coolant carrying discharge line formed therein, through the at least two components. This also is not shown in the prior art for the same reasons already discussed.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 14, 25 and 28 are in condition for allowance. Claims 15-24, 26, 27, 29 and 30 are also in condition for allowance as claims properly dependent on an allowable base claim and for the subject matter contained therein.

More particularly, the use of fastening elements that include or are encased with a thermally insulating material, as set forth in claims 15, 21 and 30, is not shown in the prior art. Schirmer teaches the use of insulating material generally, but contains no disclosure of the use of insulating material within the holes through which the fastening elements are engaged. In fact, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to add insulating material as presently claimed because the fastening elements have considerable thickness which would

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already provide insulation. Furthermore, there is no possibility of providing the die head of Rice with a surrounding layer of insulation since the screw in Rice engages with a threaded bore of the part 47 of the die head. As a result, the subject matter of claims 15, 21 and 30 is not shown or suggested by the prior art.

With this amendment, new claims and the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the present application can receive an early Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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